THE UPWARD REACH

LEO J. MUIR

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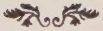
THE
UPWARD REACH

By

LEO J. MUIR



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By
LEO J. MUIR

This Volume is
affectionately dedicated
to my Parents

WILLIAM SMITH MUIR
and
LUCY DARKE MUIR

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"God the Architect," *by Harry Kemp*

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GOD THE ARCHITECT

Who Thou art I know not,
  But this much I know:
Thou hast set the Pleiades
  In a silver row;

Thou hast sent the trackless winds
  Loose upon their way;
Thou hast reared a colored wall
  Twixt the night and day;

Thou hast made the flowers to bloom
  And the stars to shine,
Hid rare gems of richest ore
  In the tunneled mine.

But chief of all Thy wondrous works,
  Supreme of all Thy plan:
Thou hast put an upward reach
Into the heart of man.

—*Harry Kemp.*

INTRODUCTORY

THE UPWARD REACH
A DIVINE GIFT

THE UPWARD REACH
A DIVINE GIFT

THE inspiration for this brief volume, and indeed the title which it bears, came to my heart a few years ago when I fell upon the delightful poem of Harry Kemp, which adorns the fly-leaf of this book.

Thus, a verse becomes the mother of a book; and the book will fully achieve the ambition of its author, if it can but give intelligent exposition of the gracious truth which is the soul of this lofty poem.

Let us bring that last verse again before our eyes. It is worthy of profound study.

> "Chief of all Thy wondrous works,
> Supreme of all Thy plan:
> Thou hast put an upward reach
> Into the soul of man."

Frequently the poet becomes a seer. His prophetic vision often penetrates to the heart of truth, revealing its essential principle—its very quintessence. Our poet friend has in these lines brought into relief a sublime truth, and he has given it noble emphasis. The authorship of this Upward Reaching of the soul is reverently ascribed to a divine source. Man has no faculty more truly divine than this upward striving of heart. Is it not indeed the manifestation of his divine sonship? Is it not truly the Kingdom of God within him?

This exalted truth has found lodgment in other minds.

Shakespeare entertained it in these words:

"What a piece of work is man:

How noble is reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving, how express and admir-

able! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a God!"

Carlyle left us this forceful paragraph:

"He is of the earth, but his thoughts are with the stars. Mean and petty his wants and desires; yet they serve a soul exalted with glorious aims—with immortal longings—with thoughts which sweep the heavens and wander through eternity. A pigmy standing on the crest of this small planet, his far-reaching spirit stretches outward to the infinite, and there alone finds rest."

From Ovid, these impressive lines:

"Thus while the brute creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend;
Man looks aloft and with uplifted eyes,
Beholds his own hereditary skies."

"Man may not cease his struggle to find God," says Reynold E. Blight. "There is a yearning at the soul of him that will not let him rest, an urge that compels him to attempt the impossible, to attain the unattainable. He lifts

feeble hands to grasp the stars and, despite a million years of failure and millenniums of disappointment, the soul of man springs heavenward with even greater zeal than when the race was young."

And let us not pass unnoticed the exquisite poem of Theodocia Pearce, copied from her charming work, "Your Thoughts and You."

GOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

God—Thou hast made the world so beautiful:
A flock of birds on pinions fleet and strong;
Then—though it were not yet enough to soar—
Gave to them song.

God—Thou hast made the world so beautiful:
A bower of green with roses gay abloom;
Then—though it were not yet enough to grow—
Gave them perfume.

God—Thou hast made the world so beautiful:
A million beings, souls their priceless gem;
Then—though it were not yet enough to live—
Gave love to them.

This Upward Reaching of the soul is the starting point in all philosophy. It is part and parcel of the very nature and substance of life. The soul of man inherently reaches upward. You may weave about this truth all the laws of physical, mental and spiritual growth. Upward Reaching of soul is the theme, the motivation, in the Creative Design.

It is Nature's persistent invitation: Exploit me, solve my mysteries, command my forces!

It is the insatiable urge of ambition—

The irresistible challenge of the strong;

The stirring call of the lofty;

The majestic summons of the erect.

It is the fascination of distant hilltops and far horizons—

The persuasive charm of guilelessness;

The deathless attraction of the beautiful;

The alluring motive of human love.

It is the unfailing urge of faith—

The clarion voice of Truth in mighty anthems;

The inspiring salutation of the "Still, Small Voice;"

The everlasting valediction of the Almighty.

PART ONE

THE GOAL OF MAN'S UPWARD REACHING IS GODSHIP

GROWING TOWARD GOD

UPWARD REACHING implies an endless quest for things above us. If man is endowed with the instinct of upward striving, it logically follows that this upward reaching is endless and insatiable. Man will never cease to reach, to strive, to aspire. In this upward progress there are no terminals, no finalities.

Eternal life means eternal growth—it can mean nothing less than that. Credulous people frequently fall into the error of believing that through one outburst of religious zeal they have accomplished salvation. A mere confession of guilt is often regarded as the essential act in attaining salvation. This is one of the regrettable fallacies of religion. Salvation is not something we can get to, or sit down with, or embrace. Salvation is a thing of growth; it is progress, attain-

ment, upward reaching. Salvation is not a place, it is not a depot, it is not a landing port. It is a process. Man is ever and always effecting his salvation, but it is never completely achieved.

It is unthinkable that even the Divine has achieved everything, that He has reached every level of intelligence and power. We speak of Him as almighty, omnipotent, omniscient. These are only relative terms. Compared to ourselves, He is all-powerful and all-wise; but there are works He will yet aspire to do. There are tests of intellect which will yet challenge His omniscience. Observe the profound study with which He undertook the problem of the world's creation. Ponder those words of Genesis: "And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Here was omniscience seeking greater knowledge, omnipotence seeking increased power! Here was the

Almighty in deep study, analyzing His problem, surveying His task!

If you want proof of His wisdom, note what followed: "And God said: 'Let there be light.'" Darkness has defied his study. Even He, the Almighty, must see His task clearly, if he would accomplish it. A study of the Divine edicts which followed in the creation of this earth, as recorded by Genesis, reveals repeated evidence that the Almighty was thinking His way and studying his task. And remember, if the Creator found occasion for study in the fashioning of this world; it is only logical to assume that He still finds increasing intelligence essential to His progress.

We may conclude, therefore, that growth and achievement, not eternal bliss and happiness, are the elements out of which life eternal is fashioned—that

salvation is a question of growing and achieving. They who expect to arrive at a place of eternal peace and rest in some future life will be disappointed. Peace and rest are the elements out of which senility and death are fashioned. The peace which immortal life offers is the peace of soul which follows the assurance of progress.

Salvation is not perfection; it is progress toward perfection. It is intelligence, increasing; power, unfolding. "The glory of God is intelligence." This is a widely accepted tenet of religion. Moreover it is sound theology. Yes, it is noble theology, and incontrovertible. May we not accept what seems to be the reasonable corollary: "The glory of man is intelligence?" Power in its essence is intelligence. Supreme power is maximum intelligence.

There is another pronouncement of theology appropriate to this discussion. It is one of the choicest axioms in religious philosophy: "A man is saved no faster than he gains knowledge." The author of that statement has attached a speedometer to man's success in achieving his salvation. That speedometer registers the speed with which man acquires knowledge, and thereby gauges his success in the matter of being saved. Such, however, is not the popular salvation of the weak or of the slothful, but it is the only genuine salvation.

Pursuing this thought, it is logical to inquire: What is the goal in this upward reaching of the human soul? Toward what End is the soul of man striving? We shall find our answer in a third postulate of theology: "As God is, man might become; for as man is, God once

was." Here is a profound lesson in evolution; and evolution, you may be sure, is the method of the Divine. The super-evolution, expressed in this august doctrine of religion, is the crowning stroke in evolution, in Divine method, in Eternal design.

Man's goal, therefore, is God-ship, which is but the unfoldment and realization of his eternal nature.

ETERNITY, INFINITY, MAN

There are only three things in the Universe, if we may speak in general terms. First of all there is an apparent eternity of time—an endlessness of the passing thread of existence. Then there is an infinity of substance, of things existent, of opportunity, all of which are awaiting the application of human intelligence for their exploitation. Finally there is man. These three—Eternity, Infinity, Man—are essentially all we see about us.

If we admit the existence of a Creator, or a Creative Genius, or Force, or Power, we must assign to that Genius or Power, the attribute of intelligence. How, otherwise, can we explain the august setting in which man finds himself. Man—in the bosom of infinity, in the midst of eternity! Infinity—the inexhaustible sub-

ject matter of existence! Eternity—the endless ladder of achievement!

It will require eternity for the exploitation of infinity, and what a wealth of power and capacity will be developed in man, the exploiter, working everlastingly in this laboratory of inexhaustible opportunity!

Not only is there revealed here the attribute of intelligence in the Creator; there is also the evidence of deep parental concern for the welfare and progress of man. Why, otherwise, should man be so auspiciously endowed, except that through these endowments, he might realize the Divine that dwells within him? "As God is, man may become." How? Through his exploitation of the infinity about him throughout eternity.

It would be stupid to attempt to fix limitations upon the intelligence, the power, or the majesty to which man may arise! When God said: "Let us make man in our image," He provided that there should be incorporated into the very being and nature of man the semblance of the Divine. He gave him this upward reaching of soul. He gave him an insatiable desire for spiritual attainment. He gave him tendencies toward integrity, justice and truthfulness. He gave him the power to grow, to aspire, to achieve, to realize the full measure of his destiny. He threaded through his being the vital forces that belong to life and to the Kingdom and heirship of God Himself.

CHRIST THE EXEMPLAR

As man reaches upward he finds Christ to be his great exemplar. His matchless life reveals the truest and strongest elements in human expression. His precepts point the unfailing way to happiness. The life of Christ is a majestic beacon, pointing forever upward. His promises are founded upon eternal law.

John tells us He once spake these words: "I am come that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly."

Luke brings to us these glad tidings: "Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Mark remembers this auspicious promise of the Master: "Therefore, I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when

ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them."

And then again John records the triumphant proclamation: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." What exultation Christ must have experienced as he uttered those assuring words to his disciples!

And the inference is plain that somehow His conquest of the world guaranteed theirs—as it guarantees ours. But His was a spiritual conquest. He had overcome the world's pleasure-seeking, its childish regard for glitter, its selfishness, its hatred of goodness, its imbecility in opposing divine purposes. This He had achieved by resisting the world, by showing himself actually superior to its most powerful influences.

Christ's life is at once experimental and authoritative. It covers the greatest of all themes: "How Life Should Be Spent." His overcoming the world is not merely a private victory—it is a public good also, because in his living the perfect beauty of a life devoted to eternal and spiritual ends is conspicuously shown.

We might inquire further as to His method of overcoming the world, and we shall find our answer in his own precepts: "Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good."

That was Christ's method and it is the method of Science—yes, the law and the procedure of nature. This law is orderly evolution. It is the principle of substitution through which the low is displaced

by the high, the weak by the strong, the unfit by the fit, the old by the new. It is the law by which Time made the Canadian Rockies, the Mississippi Valley and the Grand Canyon of the Colorado. The principle of substitution is Time's gentle handmaiden. This law is effectively applied by Paul in the following instructions to his brethren:

"Finally, brethren,
Whatsoever things are true,
Whatsoever things are honest,
Whatsoever things are just,
Whatsoever things are pure,

Whatsoever things are lovely,
Whatsoever things are of good report;
If there be any virtue
And if there be any praise—
Think on these things.

"Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of Peace shall be with you."

Probably there is no circumstance in the life of Christ which more clearly reveals the upward impulsion of His teachings than His appearance one Sunday morning at the spring in Bethesda. You will remember the story. Five little porches or platforms had been built about that quiet spring. The Master found in these porches a great multitude of impotent folk, hopeful of being healed of their infirmities. There was a tradition that at a certain season an angel went down into this spring and troubled the water. Whosoever stepped into the water first thereafter was cured of his infirmities.

As the Master stepped into the presence of these impotent folk this Sabbath morning, His eyes fell upon one who stood in greatest need of His ministrations. This was a man who had been

afflicted thirty and eight years. There he sat disconsolate, waiting for the bubbling of the water, trusting that by some chance he might be first to get into the pool, and thus be cured of his malady.

The Master, with the keen eye of a trained physician, singled out this unfortunate fellow and startled him with the impelling question: "Wilt thou be made whole?" The frail invalid caught the rebuke in the Master's interrogation. He hastened to manifest his sincerity. He assured the Master he desired to be made well, but that always some other came first into the spring and claimed the blessing he had sought.

Satisfied as to the sincerity and faith of this man, who had been sick thirty and eight years, the Master roused him with this powerful command: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk!"

Here indeed is masterful speech! Seven terse, simple words! Yet they ring with power and with promise! They are full of action—action that reaches upward and moves forward. Note the three commanding verbs: "rise," "take up," "walk." The first brings the invalid to his feet—to an erect posture, to a confident reliance upon the strength of his limbs, those limbs thirty and eight years afflicted! The second commands that the inticing roll of bedding be picked up, rolled up, and thrown over the shoulder —that bed into which he was wont to fall and upon which he had so long nurtured his feebility. The third, "walk," enjoins him to get about in the world, to resume his labors, to move with interpid pace upon those erstwhile enfeebled limbs.

And John calmly asserts, as if there could be no doubt about it: "And imme-

diately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked."

The stirring mandate of the Christ had aroused in this impotent man a power long dead—*The Will to Arise.*

Not alone this impotent man has been quickened by the upward call of the Christ. Legion are they who abide in His word and are made free and are lifted up by the truth therein.

And still abides this generous invitation to commune with him:

> "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sup with him and he with me."

In that cordial communion, there are still those who wander with Him about the Sea of Galilee and up into the mountain where gracious beautitudes are uttered unto them.

There are still those whose loftiness of heart admits them into His presence upon the Sacred Mount where He is transfigured and glorified. These, like Peter, acclaim those rapturous words: "Master, it is good for us to be here!"

There are still those who, like Simon of Cyrene, have the signal honor of being "compelled to bear His cross." These, we may be assured, will be foremost to enjoy His deathless promise:

> "And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all men unto me."

There are still those who, like the eleven disciples in the mountains of Galilee, may sit with Him fearlessly and hear His auspicious promise:

> "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the World."

PART TWO

UPWARD REACHING THE SUPREME REFINEMENT OF LIFE

"UP"

"UP" IS a little word and perhaps an ugly word; but it connotes goodness, strength, courage, progress. Observe the power reflected in these terse mandates: Wake up! Get up! Stand up! Brace up! Hurry up! Cheer up! Is there not in these vigorous thoughts the vital energy of all human philosophy?

Reaching is one of the noblest of pursuits. Upward reaching is the supreme refinement of life. Too many of us have lost our power to reach upward, and yet there are alluring things ever and ever tempting us to aspire. Each morning the rising sun beckons our eyes upward. As that sun slowly mounts the arc of Heaven we are challenged to lift our souls with it. At night the moon pierces the star-decked sky, again drawing us upward.

Someone has reminded us: "A Man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?" Another has remarked: "So long as there are human beings who reach for the stars the world will go on."

Recently I clipped this from Arthur Brisbane's popular column, Today: "Man's progress depends on his innate hatred of amounting to nothing. All that men have achieved in their one million years of existence on this earth, all the marvels they have accomplished in the twelve thousand years since the late stone age, are due to the desire to be something. Human nature has a horror of inconspicuousness. Men hate to amount to nothing."

This upward reaching is the possession of all mankind, a universal gift. God is democratic. To each human heart He has given this vehicle of mortal success

and happiness, this quenchless desire. But it is not a mere striving for endlessness of life. The assurance that life goes on and on interminably is not sufficient to appease this God-like upward striving of the soul.

There are instincts of the spiritual nature, just as there are instincts of the physical nature. While this upward reaching of the soul exerts its influence upon physical life, it is essentially a spiritual force. It is a striving to achieve the "Divinity that shines within us." It is the motive, the theme, of the Cosmic process, whose stupendous momentum is ceaselessly forging the spiritual perfection of humanity.

A LESSON FROM THE SPARKS

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a fathers' and sons' outing. When the sports of the day had ended, two hundred fathers and sons gathered about the campfire that they might sit close and get acquainted with each other. A huge pile of dead wood had been gathered to keep the fire bright during the evening. The setting was superb. A calm stream moved gently by and just beyond arose a huge cliff. The moon approaching mid-sky seemed to be scaling this lofty peak. There sat these fathers and their sons, their hearts awake to Nature's teachings.

A great lesson came—a lesson from the sparks of the bonfire. Such sparks they were! Some burst vehemently from the burning embers, only to vanish in the darkness a few feet above ground; some floated calmly into the sky, their undying

light visible far into the heavens; some, shooting like meteors, rose straight upward, challenging the eye to measure their ascent. Some, huge chips they seemed to be, burst forth to fall and sizzle upon the ground.

How like sparks are men! The distance to which the spark may arise is measured by the manner in which it reduces itself to flame. The heights to which men arise are determined by the degree to which their souls may be quickened by the fire of aspiration.

A splinter of wood, embedded in soil and dirt, will arise but feebly, the weight of dirt upon it speedily bringing it back, its flame consumed. Similarly, men often fail to achieve their nobler aspirations, because they cannot carry upward the weight of dross and dirt and debris clinging to their souls.

Each of us may well make this personal inquiry: "Is my mind free to arise? Is my heart unburdened of its pollution? Am I weighted down by dross and earthliness? Am I trying to carry up with me too much of the sediment of the earth? Am I quickened by the Upward Reaching Power within me?"

PART THREE

UPWARD REACHING THROUGH PURPOSEFUL RESOLUTIONS

"I will seek the Good and the Beautiful."

"I will think high."

"I will think resolutely."

I WILL SEEK THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

LET this resolution claim your imagination and observe what vast discoveries you will make.

You will be charmed to learn how full earth is of goodness and beauty.

Emerson left us this pleasant thought: "As much of heaven is visible as we have eyes to see." We may safely add: As much of heaven is audible as we have ears to hear.

How much of heaven do you see? How much of heaven do you hear?

Perhaps we have made a mistake in projecting heaven into the far distant future. We have characterized heaven by vague and indefinite words, and have given it a remote and indistinct location.

"Sometime, somewhere" are words typical of our placement of heaven.

How fine a thing it would be if we could substitute "Now and Here" for "Sometime and Somewhere." There are thousands of people who are enjoying heaven here and now; who, because of the goodness of their lives, the charm of their service to others, the growing richness of their intelligence and the grace of their spirituality, are actually enjoying the rich fruition of heaven here and now. These have eyes to see the beauty and ears to hear the melody of the heaven which surges about them. They have found the good and the beautiful in nature and in mankind.

The admonition that we should lay up treasures in heaven must not be taken too literally. Let us think of "treasures of heaven," rather than "treasures in

heaven." In other words it is prudent to seek those acquisitions which are a part of the soul, which belong to heaven, which have eternal value, and among the choicest of these is the faculty of finding the good and the beautiful in life.

In a cupola atop one of the office buildings in Los Angeles is the odorous laboratory of an assayer. Here a thrifty Scotchman frees gold from dross. This daily quest of the rare and the precious has refined the soul of this industrious chemist. Though more than eighty years of age he has the foot-fall of a boy and the gladsome heart of a child.

Last year he journeyed back to the old home. He took the Air to New York, the Water to Liverpool. Then he covered Western Europe by Air.

His audacious soul, up-bound, has found the luster and the charm in living.

The Upward Reach in his heart has been nobly unleashed. His ceaseless search for gold has been rewarded.

He has found the good and the genuine and the precious in life.

ARTISTS AT WORK

Two artists entered a beautiful park on the morning of July 5th. The park was "messed up" with paper napkins, candy boxes, banana pealings, cigar stumps—the litter of National Patriotism.

Each artist painted a picture. One didn't see the candy boxes, the banana pealings, the tips of cigars. He saw beauty in nature—the landscape, the trees and sky mirrored in the glassy lake. His was a magnificent picture! The other saw the paper napkins, and banana pealings. He lacked the genius to look around them, and so they got into his picture. It was spotted with cigar stumps and paper boxes and refuse of this sort and that. He saw the rubbish. Why shouldn't it appear in his picture?

We are all painting pictures. Minds are made up largely of pictures—your mind and mine. Our friends are but pictures in our memories—moving pictures, perhaps. Let us look some of them over, as they pass before Memory's eyes. What are these conspicuous things we see, faults or virtues? Our picture is littered up with spots and specks. Ugliness and oddity — like paper boxes and cigar stumps—are crowding their way to the center of the picture. The serene loveliness of character is obscured and hidden by trifling flaws in disposition or in personality.

Oh, some pictures there are in which we have generously overlooked the flaws and faults! It was easy not to see the banana pealings and cigar stumps. Through a kindly glass we beheld our friend. Why not always thus?

All pictures will be fairer, if we can catch the spirit of Bolton Hall:

> "I looked at my brother with the microscope of Criticism and I said: 'How coarse my brother is!' I looked at him with the Telescope of Scorn and I said: 'How small my brother is!' Then I looked into the Mirror of Truth and I said: 'How like me my brother is!' "

Those lines should help even the most austere of us to keep the spec(k) out of inspection.

A pessimist has been defined as one who sees microbes in the milk of human kindness. "The optimist churns the milk of human kindness into cottage cheese; the pessimist, into Limberger cheese."

Elbert Hubbard gives this admonition:

> "Don't lose faith in humanity. There are over a hundred ten million people in the United States who have never played you a single nasty trick."

"Live the love-tinctured life," says Henry Knight Miller, "and you will soar to sunkissed summits, bearing your fellows aloft, drawing men with irresistible compulsion. You will be for many as the shadow of a great oak at summer's noontide, as an oasis in desert places, a crystal fountain to thirsty lips."

In this same delightful mood there comes to my mind another thought whose authorship I do not remember:

> "If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the heart of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God."

We are all artists at work. If we would portray upon Life's canvas the "good" and the "beautiful," we must find these qualities everywhere about us.

WHICH: WEEDS OR FLOWERS?

Once a King was advised that poisonous weeds were destroying his kingdom. In his anxiety, he sent forth botanists to check this report. These scientists traveled far and wide searching for poisonous weeds. Their work done, they returned and made report to the king. Surely, the country was being ruined by poisonous weeds. Their tabulations were voluminous and convincing.

However, someone else protested that, on the contrary, the realm of the king was a veritable bed of wild flowers. Relieved by this thought, the king sent others forth to find and catalog the wild flowers in the domain. These also searched far and wide. Everywhere they found beautiful wild flowers. Returning, they gave their report to the king, equally voluminous and convincing.

The first looked for poisonous weeds, the others for the beauty and fragrance of wild flowers. Each found what he sought.

Emerson reminds us that if we will take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have heaping measure.

From the gentle heart of Lincoln comes:

> "Die when I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best, that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower wherever I thought a flower would grow."

In like mood, these glad tidings from David Swing:

> "Evil is unnatural—good the natural state of man. Earth has no hopeless islands or continents. We live in a redemptive world. Poverty will end; sin will die; love will triumph, and hope will plant flowers on every grave."

In words as stately as the theme they

bear, Thomas Hood exhibits the very core of this philosophy:

> "I heard the croak of the raven and thought of the song of the nightingale; I smelt the smell of the mold but thought of the violets it nourished."

Let us close this theme with lines of Rupert Hughes:

> "It is part of the pity of life that beautiful truths are the hardest to accept and the most dismal lies the easiest."

> "There are still millions of people running around loose who think that ignorance is a virtue, a duty. Perhaps the majority of people are of that opinion, but what a hideous opinion!"

> "One by one the rose leaves fall, but it takes a hurricane to knock the burrs off thistles."

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AT HAND

Many years ago a story came to me of a widowed mother on an Idaho farm. Her five children were small and powerless to assist her in exploiting the resources of an extraordinary farm, which had been the pride of her husband and the object of his devotion and labor. To this widowed mother these vast acres were an insuperable burden. They defied her feeble efforts; they worried her.

In a moment of anxiety she resolved to sell the property and summoned a realtor to effect the sale. With keen eye and sharp pencil this alert salesman surveyed the farm from fence to fence. His data obtained, he sat beneath the protecting shade of a Boxelder tree near the cottage and there fashioned the advertise-

ment which he felt sure would bring a quick sale.

He knew the art of selling, as his lucid description of the property fully revealed. Confidently he called the lady forth from her domestic labors to hear what he had written.

She sat with her apron thrown about her hands and listened as this specialist read his story. He told of the deep black soil of inexhaustible fertility. He traced the streams and brooklets of life-giving water threading their way through field and meadow and pasture. He told of the deep grasses, the bounteous crops of grain and the complacent cattle in the fields.

There was a touch of tenderness in his description of the home—a half old-fashioned cottage set modestly back from the roadway. Huge shade trees protected

it from the sun and wind; hollyhocks bowed their colorful heads in the front yard, patches of unkept lawn lured the weary to rest; an old oaken bucket hung enticingly in the well. All this, and more, was vividly portrayed.

The skillful salesman waxed eloquent. The widow raised the apron to her eyes. He noted her emotion and paused in his reading. Recovering her composure, she said with choking voice: "Well, I truly desired to sell the home; but you have awakened in my soul so many fond memories of the dear old place that I cannot part with it. I am resolved to keep it, to treasure it, however great the labor."

This mother had suddenly caught the meaning of that stirring proclamation of John the Baptist: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

And let us pause to reflect that the best proof we shall ever give of our progress in reaching upward will be the fact that we have learned to labor cheerfully with the tools at hand and with the people close about us; that we have discovered goodness and beauty all around —that we have found the Kingdom of Heaven at hand.

I WILL THINK HIGH

In his Upward Reaching man is lured from above, not lifted from beneath. If there is nothing above his vision, enticing his interest and challenging his aspiration, he cannot arise. The notable achievements of life have followed man's reaching for the stars.

Someone has remarked: "You have to think high to rise."

Lowell's prayer sustains the same lofty thought: "What is dark in me, illumine; what is low, raise and support."

Man could have no greater gift than the fulfillment of that prayer in his behalf. With light upon his pathway and a high purpose in his heart, what can man not accomplish?

Bulwer leaves the assuring promise:

"Dream manfully and nobly, and thy dreams shall be prophets."

Lowell assures us: "Not failure, but low aim, is crime."

Therefore, commit yourself to this resolution:

I Will Think High!

There is a dual meaning in this high resolve. There is direction, and there is action. There is loftiness of aim, but primarily there is "thinking."

Thought is master; thought rules the world. Thinking is intelligence at work.

The highest reaches of the soul have followed, and can only follow, the challenging beacon of intelligence.

"Mind is the measure of the man." There is nothing higher in human attainment, and nothing more perfect, than a

chaste intellect. Chastity of mind is indeed more difficult to achieve than chastity of heart. Purity of intellect is the crowning perfection of life.

But your thinking must be high, if you hope to arise. Man scales the heights of achievement upon the ladder of his upturned thoughts.

He cannot think high whose head is bowed with worry and despair. He will not think high whose heart is bent upon base desires. He cannot think high whose soul has lost the quickening power of faith.

Sometime while you are walking try this practical experiment in upward reaching. Cast your eyes upon the ground. Focus your vision upon the pebbles and the grass blades at your feet. In a moment you will see them very clearly. You seem to be close to them. Your sta-

ture is shortened. You are a diminutive being, a pigmy.

Lift your eyes suddenly to the tree-tops, to the sky. Focus your vision upon the clouds. Soon you are lifted toward them. How tall you seem! And how greatly you have grown since you lifted your eyes from the pebbles and the grass blades! How vast the contrast!

This physical experiment is typical of the growth in moral courage that comes to him who "thinks high"—who lifts his thoughts from things lewd and ignoble and fixes them upon the pure and the lofty.

He who looks downward relaxes his energies and represses his ambitions. He who looks upward amplifies his perspective and exalts his purposes. Ambition urges him and aspiration waits upon him.

Astronomers boast of a death rate fifteen to twenty per cent below the average. Keen interest in some lofty enterprise is the most wholesome health tonic ever concocted. The study of astronomy is a high enterprise, which intrigues interest amazingly. Hence the low death rate among students of the stars.

A beautiful adaptation of this experience is found in Whitman's lines:

> "Keep your face toward the sunshine and the shadows will fall behind you."

And finally:

Hope nobly!
Aspire grandly!
Achieve magnificently!

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my Soul,
As the swift seasons roll. . . ."

"I Will Think High!"

THE KING AND THE ARCHITECT

Upward Reaching That Failed

There is a story about an ancient king and an architect. And a wonderful story it is—the story of an upward reaching that failed. The zeal which impelled upward was nullified by the rubbish and debris of selfishness. The King was Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt. Sostrotus was the architect.

Somebody had quickened the pride and ambition of Ptolemy by the suggestion that a lighthouse should be built on the shore of the Mediterranean to protect the seamen on those dangerous waters. Ptolemy saw in this undertaking a highway to fame and honor.

In regal fashion he set about his task. The architect was sent abroad to study

lighthouses and to bring home plans for the noblest of all lighthouses. All plans perfected, the King imposed burdensome taxes on the people that this auspicious and costly edifice might be promptly erected.

Sostrotus perfected the plans, personally supervised every minute detail, sparing no time or energy. That lighthouse was to bless the world. Mariners from every clime would see its noble beacon from sixty miles distant. They would find the safe channels and avoid the dangerous rocks. Thousands would manifest their gratitude to the King whose benign thoughtfulness had performed this gracious deed.

But the King desired his fame to endure. He requested that his name should be engraved upon a huge marble slab conspicuously placed upon the front of the lighthouse.

Sostrotus was also ambitious. His genius had designed this noble monument. His labor had brought that design into form and being. He too wanted to be remembered.

In the privacy of his workshop Sostrotus deceived the King. In the marble slab he carved his own name and the record of his achievement. Skillfully he covered the marble slab with a lime coating in such fine workmanship that no observer's eye detected the sham. In this artificial facing he carved the words, "Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt," with appropriate historical data. The slab was given its conspicuous place in the fore wall of the building. There it stood, a thing of beauty, an appropriate frontispiece in one of the "Seven Wonders of the World."

The years passed by rapidly. Soon

King and architect were gone. Pharos at Alexandria stood as the mightiest sentinel of the sea.

But lime is not marble, however close the counterfeit. The winds, the sun, the moisture of the sea—all played upon that fictitious slab. The lime chipped off bit by bit until the entire coating had fallen away. Then one day men saw in bold relief the name, "Sostrotus, the Architect."

That lighthouse was the child of a generous purpose. In its beauty and strength were invested the finest workmanship and the noblest industry. Its creators deserved a place in the hearts of mankind. They forfeited that place—the muddy debris of selfishness and vanity blurred their glory.

THINKING HIGH THROUGH WORDS

"Inform—Refine—Inspire"

Let these three words teach you the art of thinking high.

How much of the subject matter that comes each day to your attention is of such quality as to inform, refine and inspire you? Apply that test and you may find it necessary to change your intellectual and spiritual diets.

The word "inform" implies more than the acquisition of knowledge. That knowledge must be "formed within;" it must be suitable, well arranged and usable knowledge — knowledge that is orderly, purposeful and harmonious.

"Refine" means, to make fine again, or in greater degree. It is a process not a perfected condition.

"Inspire" means literally, "to breath into or to put spirit into." In common usage the spirit connoted is that of courage, goodness of heart, bigness of soul, ambition to achieve, the fervor of the scientist, the zeal of the evangelist, the devotion of the patriot.

Let these three resourceful words guide you and your Upward Reaching will be quickened immeasurably.

I WILL THINK RESOLUTELY

It is the thought entertained with purpose and constancy that produces results. The failure most to be feared is the failure to cleave resolutely to one's purpose.

Strong thoughts exert a powerful influence upward. Weak thoughts account for much of the insignificance and the sordid grovelling we find in the world.

"The nerve which never relaxes—the eye which never blanches—the thought which never wanders—the purpose that never wavers—these," someone has said, "are the masters of victory."

Resolution is omnipotent; it is the distinguishing element in every truly great character.

"I Will Think Resolutely!"

"The world is ours," says Henry Knight Miller, "and we are destined for mastery over every adverse circumstance and force, provided we take the time and have the patience to develop the Will to Do."

Catch the spirit of Jessie B. Rittenhouse in her poem:

MY WAGE

I bargained with Life for a penny,
And life would pay no more,
However I begged at evening
When I counted my scanty store.

For life is a just employer;
He gives you what you ask,
But once you have set the wages,
Why you must bear the task.

I worked for a menial's hire—
Only to learn dismayed,
That any wage I had asked of Life,
Life would have paid.

Confident thinking is the parent of self-confidence. Aware of his noble setting in the universe, man should hold unwavering self-reliance. He should possess that quiet courage reflected in these lines from Edward Jack Appleton:

"I have no fear. What is in store for me
Shall find me ready for it undismayed.
God grant my only cowardice may be
Afraid—to be afraid!

"He who is firm and resolute in will molds the world to himself."

Grandeur and nobility are usually wrested from tremendous struggles.

Thoughts resolutely entertained are the rounds in the ladder of achievement and Upward Reaching.

Lincoln understood this principle when he said: "The occasion is piled high with

difficulties and we must rise with the occasion."

"I Will Think Resolutely"

A lad leaps across the Atlantic. Few eyes beheld him as his plane, heavy laden, struggled upward that dull morning. Light and darkness—and light and darkness—beheld his faultless course.

What audacious purpose! What unyielding perseverance! What high resolution!

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of Heaven," carrying an everlasting Gospel; and the glad tidings thereof were borne upon every tongue and to every nation, kindred and people.

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth glad tidings!"

Immediately the world "made room" for Charles Lindbergh.

A deed such as this must have inspired Edna St. Vincent Millay:

MAKE ROOM

"The world stands out on either side,
No wider than the heart is wide.
Above the world is stretched the sky,
No higher than the soul is high.

The heart can push the sea or land
Farther away on either hand,
The soul can split the sky in two
And let the face of God shine through.

But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat, the sky
Will cave in on him by and by."

THINK RESOLUTELY

Why Be a Prisoner or a Pauper?

And what are you in this world, my friend—a prisoner or a guest? What is your own appraisal of your standing? Which are you, and are you sure? Oh, sometimes you are a guest; sometimes you are a prisoner. Why can't you be a guest all the time?

As you journey upon the earth, are you a tramp or a tourist? A pauper or a prince? A lodger or a proprietor? Which are you? Have you satisfied yourself as to your rank and rating?

In your own estimate of your life, what are you—a slave or a master? A captive or a conqueror? A foe or a friend? A hater or a lover? A cynic or a believer? Which?

I fancy the answer to these questions

will be found in your own feelings—in your own attitude toward life. These inquiries should inspire sharp introspection. This volume admonishes that you judge others leniently, yourself critically and severely.

As you look deep down into your own soul, what are your findings? Is your heart the source of strong, audacious thoughts? Or, is your soul the lazy campground of weakness and despair? Are you cringing with fear or courageous in faith? Make your own self-examination, and draw your own conclusions.

Are you working on the wrecking crew, or on the construction gang? From which group do you draw your stipendia? Are you helping out or hanging on? Have you kept your nerve, or have you lost your nip?

A NEW HERCULES

Would you test your power to do strong deeds? Try to be a Hercules in mental and spiritual attainments. Here are twelve super-human feats vastly more difficult to achieve than the feats of Hercules of old.

I will inhibit the expression of pride, envy and malice.

I will seek self-mastery rather than power over others.

I will turn to the up-look when the outlook is not good.

I will cultivate the courage that can stand alone.

I will be content to plant seeds rather than blossoms.

I will keep a "bird in the bush" not made of gold.

I will judge myself severely, others leniently.

I will listen widely, think deeply and speak discreetly.

I will cultivate the enviable power of forgetting and forgiving.

I will avoid the practice of looking for easy things.

I will prefer the love and confidence of my own household to the praises and the plaudits of the multitude.

I will cultivate the companionship of the "Still Small Voice."

I WILL ARISE AND GO TO MY FATHER

You are familiar with the classic story of the Prodigal Son.

You will remember he had drawn his heritage and had "wasted his substance in riotous living."

Reduced to poverty he joined himself to a citizen of the country who sent him into the fields to feed swine.

"He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat."

"And when he came to himself, he said: 'How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!' "

Then there came to his heart a mighty

resolution, clothed in language, decorous and majestic:

"I will arise and go to my father!"

Well, after all, is not that the fullness of life for each of us: That we shall resolve to arise, that we shall respond to the God-like impulse to reach upward—that "we shall arise and go to the Father?"

That is the goal, the beauty, the fulfillment of life.

CONCLUSION

"ARISE"

ARISE!

Listen to the call of the bursting dawn —and thou shalt hear the never-ending anthem of the universe:

ARISE!

Betake thyself to Springtime fields where Nature crowds into life—and thou shalt catch the mighty urge:

GROW!

Hasten to the marts of trade and enterprise, where men battle for "places in the sun"—and thou shalt thrill with the militant challenge:

ACHIEVE!

Enter halls of learning and laboratories of science—and thou shalt be quickened by the God-like invitation:

ASPIRE!

Stand ye within the Temple—and thou shalt read the Salutation of the Eternal:

EXALT THYSELF!

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